

lower, fainter until, far away, it died in a faint whisper.

A stream of some considerable size—the Lee—winds its way through the little valley, and at one place it spreads itself out and forms Serpent Lake. This lake was pointed out to us as the place where St. Patrick's work of banishing the snakes from Ireland was finished. The last snake consigned to banishment was received into the gloomy depths of Serpent Lake, and there were never any more snakes in Ireland—"only," my fair informant added, "one snake comes back at the end of every seven years, but it is always killed, so there is never any more than one." She should be authority in such matters for she lives in St. Patrick's cottage and within a stone's throw of the very spot where Ireland's patron saint did his most memorable work.

On our way thru the gap we were importuned to buy an emulsion of goat's milk and "mountain," dew but we successfully resisted the blandishments of the female vendors, and hurried on to the Upper Lake where the boatman we had engaged was to meet us. Three lakes, upper, middle and lower, constitute the "Lakes of Killarney," and we had a fourteen mile row thru them to Ross Castle on the lower lake, where we took a jaunting car back to town again.

The Killarney lakes are beautiful bodies of water, and the scenery in all that region is magnificent; the people are justly proud of it. Their pride may explain, in part, their local superstitions and their unquestioning belief in old traditions, myths and giant stories. I asked a guide if the people really believed all the fairy stories he had been telling us; of giants standing on the mountain tops and hurling rocks into the lake so big that they became islands; of giants jumping across the lakes and leaving their tracks in the solid rock—tracks of feet ten feet long—and he said, with energy enough to carry conviction: "Believe them! of course we believe them!"

From Killarney we went to Dublin where we spent two nights and a day. It is an interesting city. Phoenix Park is here, of which everybody has heard, and Trinity college and O'Connell's statue. Belfast was our next stopping place; a finely built, enterprising, wholly modern city. In southern Ireland nearly all the people are Catholics, but in Belfast the Protestants are largely in the majority. I do not know whether the lack of enterprise among the people in the south is due to the influence of the priests or not, but in the north where their influence is not so much felt, the country has an air of prosperity and business push which one looks for in vain in the south. The chief industries of Belfast are linen weaving and ship building. In my next letter I will speak of the Giant's Causeway.

Hagerstown, Md.

"Manners are not idle,
But the fruit of a loyal nature and a noble heart."

The Home

Farewell to the Old Year

Farewell Old Year; we walk no more together;
I catch the sweetness of thy latest sigh,
And, crowned with yellow brake and withered
heather,

I see thee stand beneath this cloudy sky.

Here in the dim light of a gray December,
We part in smiles, and yet we meet in tears;
Watching thy chilly dawn, I well remember
I thought thee saddest born of all the years.

I knew not then what precious gifts were hidden
Under the mist that veiled thy path from sight;
I knew not then that joy would come unbidden,
To make thy closing hours divinely bright.

I only saw the dreary clouds unbroken,
I only heard the plash of icy rain,
And in that winter gloom I found no token
To tell me that the sun would shine again.

Oh, dear Old Year, I wronged a Father's kindness,
I would not trust him with my load of care;
I stumbled on in weariness and blindness,
And, lo, he blessed me with an answered prayer!

Good-by, kind Year, we walk no more together,
But here in quiet happiness we part;
And from thy wreath of faded fern and heather
I take some sprays, and wear them on my heart.

SARAH DOUDNEY.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

B. C. MOOMAW

On its irresistible torrent time bears all things, joys, sorrows, hopes, events, nations, worlds, and we ourselves, tossing there as the light foam which sparkles for a moment on the bosom of the flood, and is seen no more forever.

And this multitude of things which burdens time, rushing out of a past eternity into eternity to come, extending on all sides beyond the horizon of human knowledge, presents an incomprehensible world—phenomena, environed before and behind with impenetrable mystery, awaiting for its solution the touch of One whose thought is before, beneath, and beyond all being; like the sun whose smile awakes to life a beautiful flower, kindles a glory upon its wonderful leaves, and smiles none the less upon its autumn grave, knowing the spring—time resurrection which shall soon follow.

In this vast whirl of mysteries man himself stands forth as the chief mystery for which all other mysteries exist, possessing the key to them all, locked up as yet within his own bosom, beyond his own reach, but impatiently awaiting that consummation of destiny which the coming ages shall unfold, bringing him face to face with the Author of his being, and answering every question, fulfilling every aspiration, which arose in the deeper depths of his soul.

Life! Conscious being! The power of thought! That fluttering of an unseen wing; what touch of the wizard's wand can we liken unto it? What word of deep penetrating science can explicate it?

We stand in the presence of the great fact as one might stand in the presence of the ocean, awed, subdued to reverential silence, but comprehending it not. Nay we are the

fact. It is not separable from us. I am this mystery. Thou art this mystery. From whence has this flood tide of time borne us; and to what haven or to what cataract are we hurried along, not tarrying even for a moment tho a beckoning paradise should smile from either bank awakening within us the vain wish to linger amid its vernal bloom, and give over the fateful journey into the dread unknown before us.

Gone is the old year with all its freight of significant events, to some a troubled dream, to others a fragrant and delightful memory softly radiating in the soul like the subdued glory which lingers in the sky after the sun sinks behind the blue hills. It has gone to its own place among the archives, or it may be amid the ruins, of a buried past, leaving perhaps here and there some small token which may speak its silent language to far off generations searching with curious gaze among the crumbling monuments of a forgotten glory.

As for the rest, the troubled hurrying to and fro of feverish millions, the serious political and social problems of the day, the innumerable forest leaves of an exuberant literature, rustling with the steady winds of sober thought or driven before the tempests of human passion, they are but as the grass which to-day is, but to-morrow is cast into the oven; or as the chaff which the wind driveth away; or as the footprints of a child in the changing sands of the seashore.

Yet there is nothing so repugnant to the human mind as this thought of utter forgetfulness, which hangs like a black shadow across every man's path. We recoil with horror from the thought of annihilation, that blotting out of name and memory as tho we had never been, when even love, the last to forget, itself fades into dim nothingness, like a ray of warm light entangled in arctic mists, or imprisoned in mountains of eternal ice enveloped in eternal night.

No man however humble, however unbelieving, but stands sometime at the door of immortality, it may be only his own narrow, insufficient, distorted conception of immortality, stands nevertheless in desperate or pathetic earnestness clamoring for admission, lest the black shadow silently following him swallow him up in boundless wastes of impenetrable gloom.

But the immortality of philosophism, the immortality of human forgetfulness, be it ever so proud a place in the pantheon of history, would be poor consolation indeed if it must be purchased at the price of personal consciousness, thenceforth to represent the living man as the shriveled mummy of Sesotris, in some vast museum, stands for the mighty Pharaoh of four thousand years ago, the mere shadow and shell of him, even carrying some rational doubt whether it be him at all. Job is counted a poet's dream, Homer is voted a myth. The very gods which for a thousand years terrorized the nations and dark frown or fiery thunderbolt have utterly perished from the memory of